

Impact Round Up 1st March: Data sharing, the defence of disciplines, and PhD employment.

 blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2014/03/01/impact-round-up-1st-march/

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Managing Editor **Sierra Williams** presents a round-up of popular stories from around the web on higher education, academic impact, and trends in scholarly communication.

[PLOS' New Data Policy: Public Access to Data](#) by Liz Silva at the PLOS ONE community blog, EveryONE:

...all authors who submit to a PLOS journal will be asked to provide a Data Availability Statement, describing where and how others can access each dataset that underlies the findings. This Data Availability Statement will be published on the first page of each article.

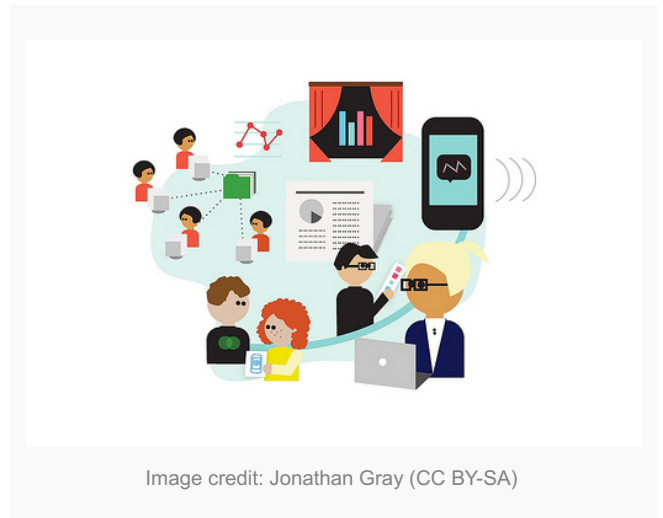
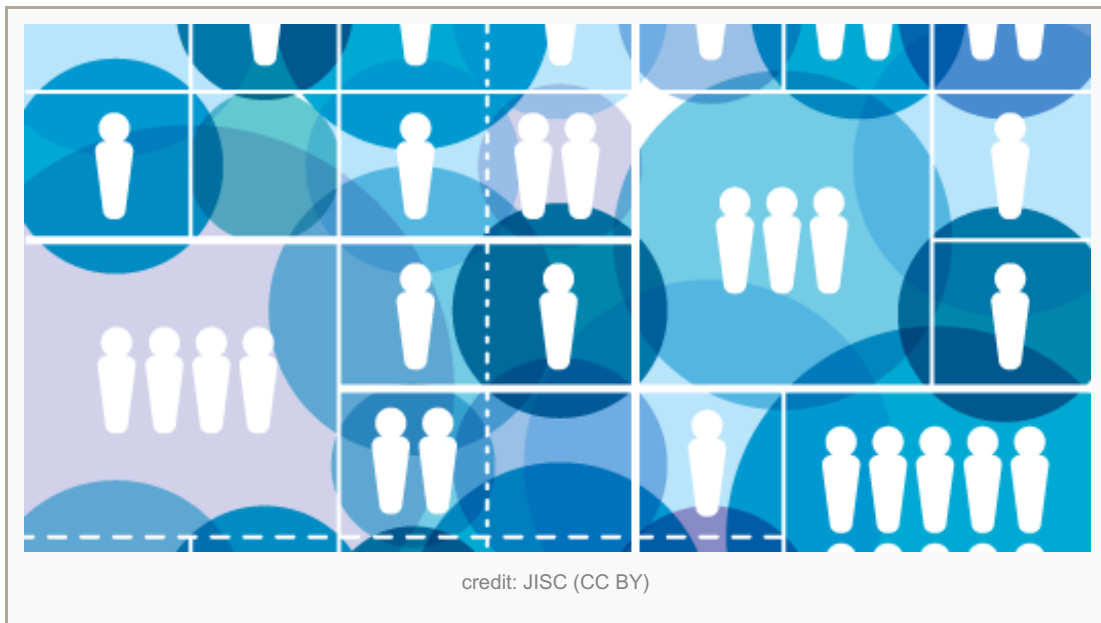


Image credit: Jonathan Gray (CC BY-SA)

Whilst PLOS have always [requested authors make their data available](#) upon request, this policy revision formalises their intent to ensure their authors are actively taking steps in the preparation and dissemination of datasets connected to journal articles to benefit the wider scientific community. One might think this is not a particularly revolutionary step as a number of funding bodies already require this sort of thing, but the science blogosphere was up for debating the potential perils of the policy, which comes into effect today. Concerns have been raised on [repercussions for researchers in low- to middle-income countries](#), [lack of clarification on which data](#), whilst others have highlighted that making [data upon request is simply not enough](#) and active policies like this aimed at changing researcher behaviour should be encouraged.

[A Call to Embrace Silos](#) by Scott Jaschik at Inside Higher Ed on Jerry A. Jacobs new book, *In Defense of Disciplines: Interdisciplinarity and Specialization in the Research University*

While many faculty members are excited about interdisciplinarity, they should be more skeptical, [Jacobs] said. The push for interdisciplinarity “fits with current managerial ideology, and increases the power of administrators.” His goal with the book is not that academe should shut down all interdisciplinary programs, but that professors and administrators shouldn’t rush so quickly to assume everything interdisciplinary is good or that we would be better off in a post-disciplinary world. [\[read more\]](#)



[Our PhD Employment Problem, Part I](#) by David Laurence at the MLA Office of Research blog [The Trend](#):

...the evidence we possess points to two conclusions: people who enter the long and arduous path of doctoral study in the humanities do so having a postsecondary faculty career as their primary goal, and people who pursue graduate education in the humanities actually find careers in a far broader range of professional positions than postsecondary teaching, even if their first job after graduate school is a postsecondary faculty position on or off the tenure track. So the question isn't whether doctoral study can lead to careers beyond postsecondary teaching—it already does and has for decades. [\[read more\]](#)

[Publishers withdraw more than 120 gibberish papers](#) by Richard Van Noorden at Nature:

Labbé developed a way to automatically detect manuscripts composed by a piece of software called SCIfgen, which randomly combines strings of words to produce fake computer-science papers. SCIfgen was invented in 2005 by researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Cambridge to prove that conferences would accept meaningless papers — and, as they put it, “to maximize amusement”...SCIfgen is free to download and use, and it is unclear how many people have done so, or for what purposes. [\[read more\]](#)

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